

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 13 January 2013

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official radio station of the South African Radio League, the national body for amateur radio in South Africa. The SARL broadcasts a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today' and follow the links for details. For audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

You can download this bulletin and previous ones from www.sarl.org.za and also subscribe there to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

Your newsreader this morning is (name), (call sign), on 145,725 from Pretoria, with relays on 7,066 MHz and 3,695 MHz SSB. (Other news readers change to suit).

IN THE NEWS TODAY:

SA AMSAT ACCELERATING THE KLETSkous CUBESAT PROJECT

NOMINATION OF COUNCILLORS

THE PEARS NATIONAL VHF/UHF CONTEST THIS COMING WEEKEND

HAMNET SERVICE IN WESTERN CAPE

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these and other important and interesting items.

SA AMSAT ACCELERATING THE KLETSkous CUBESAT PROJECT

SA AMSAT has decided to accelerate their CubeSat project, named KLETSkous and expect to have the first prototype version of the transponder and control system on the table for testing by end February. "One of the reasons to speed up development is the quest to have the transponder included as an experimental payload on the ARMC project." Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, said. Jacques Roux, ZR1ADC, is working on the transponder while Brian McKenzie, ZS1BMN, is responsible for the control systems.

As part of South Africa's contribution to the African Resource and Environmental Management Constellation (ARMC) of satellites, SANSA, in collaboration with local industry and academic experts, have been in discussions on the specifications for the new satellite (ZA-ARMC1) and its associated benefits for South Africa and the continent. SA AMSAT is making representation to SANSA to have an amateur payload included in the project.

Deon Coetzee, ZR1DE, last year demonstrated a locally designed space frame. He is currently working on the second prototype.

SA AMSAT is in serious need of funding and appeals to radio amateurs to make a financial contribution. Full details are on www.amsatsa.org.za.

NOMINATION OF COUNCILLORS

The due date for nominating councilors and submitting motions, is 31 January. The SARL requests each affiliated club, to nominate one or more of its members as councillors.

A councillor must be nominated by an SARL member and seconded by another SARL member. The nomination must be accompanied by a short amateur radio based CV as well as a signed statement by the nominee that he is willing to serve as a Councillor. Councillors should be experienced amateurs who can spend some hours per week on SARL business and can take part in council teleconference meetings.

The SARL makes extensive use of volunteers. Councillors and many other amateurs having special skills or experience, contribute their time and knowledge.

To operate effectively, many different skills are needed. At the moment it seems that there is a special need for a youth co-ordinator, for amateurs with website and database administration skills, for a forum administrator, an office manager to name but a few. There is also a need for more general skills.

Please send in your nominations now, there is no advantage in waiting until the last minute. Send nomination to secretary@sarl.org.za.

GET READY FOR THE YOUTH SPRINT ON 23 FEBRUARY

As reported over the past two weeks the SARL Youth Sprint will be held on 23 February and no longer on Youth Day on 16 June. The sprint is held 10:00 to 12:00 CAT with a special event starting at 09:00.

For the special event the SARL would like to put together an audio file of young Radio Amateurs voicing their opinions about amateur radio and why they became involved. The recordings will be done telephonically from mid-January to end January. To take part send an email with your name, call sign and telephone number to youth@sarl.org.za and you will be contacted to set up a recording date and time. All participants will go into a lucky draw for some great prizes including a 2012 ARRL Handbook and ARRL Basic Antenna. Do it today.

NOT A SARL MEMBER YET?

If you are not yet a SARL member you can now do so at only R240 covering the period from now until the end of June. This offer is only available to radio amateurs joining now or re-joining after more than a year of non-membership. The offer regretfully does not apply to members who have not yet paid their fees for the 2012/2013 year. For details visit www.sarl.org.za or call 011 6752393 on Monday. ADF GAINED R600 TO REACH R28 850

Last week the SARL Antenna Defence Fund increased by R600 to R28 850, still some way from the R50 000 target. Thanks to all who have contributed. To see a list of donors and to find out how to add your name and donation, visit www.sarl.org.za and select Antenna Defence Fund from the left hand menu.

HAMNET SERVICE IN WESTERN CAPE Hamnet in the Western Cape volunteered its services to assist at the Lion's Club of Kirstenbosch's Ride for Sight and Sound Cycle Tour, starting and ending in Fishhoek on 6 Jan 2013, and we were privileged to be able to activate ZS9DCC for the first time, during the race. 8 Hamnet members assisted, on a beautiful clear morning, in shepherding 800 riders round a 50 km course, and there were no major incidents. Assisting were ZS1CU, ZU5DX/div1, ZS1PXK, ZS1SAM, ZS1BTD, ZS1JNT, ZS1BL and ZS1DFR. We are grateful to the SARL for letting us use the ZS9DCC callsign.

THE PEARS NATIONAL VHF/UHF CONTEST THIS COMING WEEKEND

The PEARS National VHF/UHF Contest is the only VHF contest that is scheduled during the summer and covers the best period of the year for country-wide VHF contacts as well as to the neighbouring states, when propagation conditions could also change during the two day period. The month of January always provided the best propagation on Tropo and Sporadic-E, so watch out for Namibia and Zimbabwe. Make it an enjoyable and exciting VHF weekend with many stations on the VHF bands and help to promote VHF operation in this country.

The first session of the contest commences on Friday 18 January at 18:00 CAT, and ends at 16:00 CAT on Saturday. The second session starts immediately at 16:01 CAT until Sunday 20 January 2013 at 14:00 CAT.

Some of the rules of the contest have been revised and log sheets simplified for the benefit of the participants. The complete rules have been posted on the SARL VHF Forum. Good luck with the contest!

PEAK PERIOD FOR SPORADIC-E OPENINGS Thanks to Mike Bosch, ZS2FM, for this item.

Sporadic-E clouds are patches of ionization that form in the E-layer during the summer months, drift from east to west, and make long distance VHF contacts possible. These strong openings on VHF may last only ten minutes or up to an hour or even longer with a skip distance of around 500 km on 50 MHz.

The best Sporadic-E contacts in South Africa and to Namibia were made on 50 MHz during the month of January, and one particular E opening between Port Elizabeth, Windhoek and Outjo almost lasted the whole afternoon. Unfortunately these openings are unpredictable and could appear anytime in the mornings or afternoons.

The old Band 1 TV FM sound channels in Zimbabwe and Zambia, on 53,750 MHz and 53,760 MHz respectively, have often been heard in Port Elizabeth at S9 plus around midday when Sporadic-E clouds appeared further north. Therefore, it is important to watch a distant VHF beacon, preferably on 50 MHz, and when you hear it call immediately on 50,200 MHz SSB. If you are not in the range of a suitable VHF beacon then monitor the 50,200 MHz SSB frequency with the squelch on and be alerted by someone who can copy the beacons. Recently the

Cape Town VHF beacon, ZS1SIX, on 50,080 MHz has been heard several times during the afternoons via Sporadic-E propagation.

HF PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is on the rise after some periods of moderate activity. Big sunspot AR 1 654 is growing more active and is now crackling with M-class solar flares.

If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 121.

All the bands from 20 to 10 m will provide lots of DX fun with 15 m providing the best openings with 20 m not far behind. There will also be frequent 10 m openings in the afternoon, especially on sunlit paths.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS 13 January Hunting Lions-in-the-Air still active. 15 January Last day to provide feedback on the DRAFT NATIONAL RADIO FREQUENCY PLAN to sarlregwg@sarl.org.za. 18 - 20 January - PEARS National VHF/UHF contest. 26 January - SARL Summer QRP Contest 12:00 to 15:00 UTC. 31 January Last day for submission of nominations for councilors for the next term and motions for the 2013 AGM. 31 January Last day for submission of a brief outline of a proposed paper at the SA AMSAT Space Symposium on 18 May 2013 to saamsat@sarl.org.za. 23 February - SARL Youth Sprint 10:00 to 12:00 CAT with a special event starting at 09:00.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and short-wave listeners. Submit news items - if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 760 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today', go down the green column and click on 'LISTEN ON THE WEB'. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 18:30 UTC on 4 895 kHz ((A new time and frequency!)). Reception reports are invited. We are particularly interested in reports of the 4 895 kHz transmission on Mondays at 16:30 UTC as the frequency is close to the proposed new amateur allocation near 5 MHz. Reception reports from all areas in South Africa would be useful in our bid to ICASA for frequencies pilot studies. Send reports to artoday@sarl.org.za.

Sentech sponsors the transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League compiled and edited by George Honiball, ZS6NE.

Thank you for listening, 73.

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